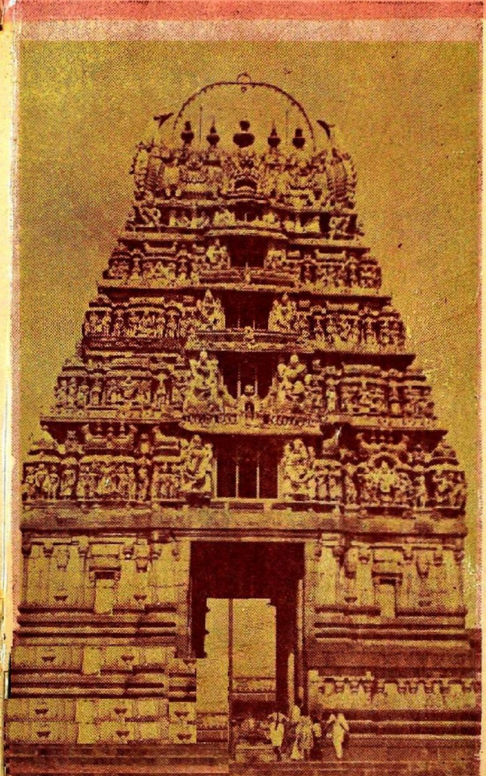
TOURIST GUIDE

Belur Hale Beedu

Shravana Belagola



BELUR TEMPLE IS A MIRROR OF INDIAN CULTURE

Rupees Three Fifty

MAYURA NRUTHYA

TOURIST GUIDE

TO

BELUR-HALEBEED

&

SRAVANABELAGOLA

by

BELUR KRISHNA MURTHY

Publisher :
B. L. ANANDA RAM
Tourist Guide
BELUR 573 115 : : HASSAN DIST.
(Karnataka)

RS. 3–00

FOREWORD

The encouragement I received from the Tourist Readership to my book BELUR, HALEBEED and SRAVANABELAGOLA in Kannada has emboldened me to bring out a similar one in English also. This book is nothing but a prototype of my previous guide. The only difference being the language used.

This book is coming out neatly dressed with the cooperation of my well-wishers to whom my gratitude is due.

I have derived much encouragement and valuable help from my uncle Sri PUTTU RAO, B.A to whom I express my sincere thanks. The responsibility of publication is very heavy and this is shouldered by Sri B. L. ANANDA RAM, to whom I remain for ever grateful. My thanks also due to Sri S. N. PARTHASARATHY for having prepared and to Sri K. VENKATAKRISHNAIAH SONS, Props : Sri Krishna Power Press for the excellent and timely Printing of this book. I owe debt of endless gratitude to all those who helped me in this enterprise.

Belur

19—9—1968 **Belur Krishna Murthy**

BELUR TEMPLE

ITS HISTORY & CONSERVATION

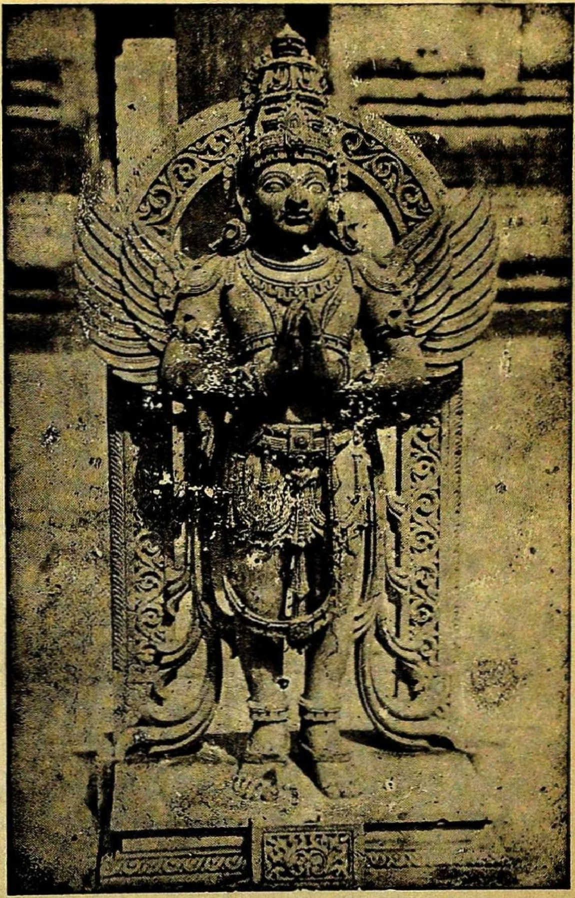
BELUR is a small town, but it was the capital or sometime of a mighty empire ruled by a line of yadava kings known as "H O Y S A L A S" This dynasty was at first subordinate to Chalukya Empire, but later on it became independent and ultimately controlled the destinies of Cholas and Pandyas in the far south of India.

The first ruler to break off from the Chalukyan yoke was the king **Vishnuvardhana** and it was he who built the main temple of **Sri Keshava.** The artistic greatness of this structure has all along been attracting to the place crowds of visitors, both Indian and Foreign. Students of art have never ceased to wonder at the grandeur of the

structure, the charm of the sculptures, the variety of the ornamental beauty & the panels, the doorways and ceilings. The successive friezes rising one upon another, depict a series of decorativem otifs, birds, animals and dancers, all full of life and vigour with a bewildering variety of attitude and movement.

The inscriptions state that Vishnuvardhana built the temple in commemoration of his victory of Talkad, against the Cholas, victory While tradition says he built the temple in token of his having conversion to Vaishnavism by the great teacher SHREE RAMANUJACHARYA who had for a time migrated from the Cholas country to this State. From a detailed study of the structure, it looks very propable that he built only the star shaped Garbhagruha (Sanctum Sanctorium) the Sukanasi (Vasbule) and the Navaranga (Dancing Platform). The large niches, friezes & Sculptures on the outside and also the beautifully designed inside pillars and ceilings including three of the doorways were carved in his time.

The Garbhagruha was surmounted by a high star-shaped tower of brick and martor supported



GARUDA

by wood work and plated with gold guilded copper sheets.

Standing on a high platform on the top of a rising ground the structure had a commanding appearance The beautiful image of Keshava called as Vijayanarayana was installed In the sanctum in 1117 A. D.

At about the same time Vishnuvardhana's senior queen Shantala Devi, though inclined to Jainism did not fail to make her contributions. She got built the Chennigaraya Temple, similar in form to the main temple though less elaborate and less ornamental.

The image of Chennigaraya installed by he is almost exactly like that of K shava in the main temple though samllcr in size. It bears the votive inscription of queen. Vijayanarasimha I son and successor of Vishnuvardhana made grants for the maintenance of the temple and regular conbuct of worship. The existence of the Durbar Scene to the north of Navaranga doorway indicates that it might have some improvements in the temple.

The next king Veeraballala II got constructed in 1175 A. D. a fine pond called as "Vasudeva Thirtha" to the north-east of the main Temple. The Navaranga pavilion of the main temple which upto now was opened to all side was covered with perforated screens and the three entrances were provided with massive buttoned wooden doors, supporting towers were erected on either side of the each doorway while in the interior of the temple Navaranga was separated from the Sukanasi by insertion of beautifully carved pot-stone doorway.

Further in the compound of the temple a shrine with charming sculptures like those at Shree Kedareswara Temple at Halebeed was constructed for God Veeranarayana. In the days of Veeraballala II, one of his officers named Soma Danayaka got the central tower rebuilt with brick and wood.

When the Tugalaks invaded the Deccan, their officer Gangu Salar of Kalburgi laid seize to the temple and burnt its gate-way. Shortly afterwards he found Bahamany Dynasty.

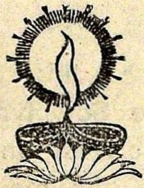
The Vijayanagar emperors spared no pains as a matter of policy all that was good and

beautiful. In 1381 A.D. an officer of Harihara II set up four granite pillars to support the cracked roof of the Sukanasi of the main temple. In 1397 A. D. Gunda, a General under Harihara II built the seven storied Gopuram in place of the old Mahadwara which had been burnt by Gangu Salar.

During the succeeding years the important buildings namely the Sowmynayaki Shrine, the larger Mantap, on the west and the Andal Shrine were put up behind the main temple, In their construction materials from the ruined Hoysala buildings at several places freely used. A good part of Navaranga of Chennigaraya temple was also re-built during the Vijayanagar period while a number of minor erections were done here and there in the compound of the temple, like Deepastamba (lamp-pole), Yagashala (where the Sacred fire in the temple is lighted).

During the 15th century the materials of the ruined Shaiva and Jaina temples, were utilised for the construction of Nagananyaka Mantap right in front of the main temple, which no more exists. The Tuluva emperors of the Vijayanagar claimed

this deity as their Family God. Several repairs and minor constructions were undertaken and completed during the Nayak Chiefs of Belur. In the year 1879 the Vimana tower became so ruined that it had to be dismantled to save the main temple from colapsing.



WHERE TO GO & WHAT TO SEE IN

BELUR TEMPLE

'Namaste Sir'

'Namaste'

"Beg your pardon. I hope you are the native of this place"

"Yes, of course"

"We have come from Mangalore with an intense desire of seeing the World famous Temple of your place. Will you please guide?"

While you have coma a- far to enjoy the art and beauty of our temple. can I refuse to accuaint you with the heavenly beauty of our temple? It is a peace of Eden on Earth. It is not a mere duty of myself alone. It is the duty and service of each and every one of this place. How can I miss this golden opportunity of guiding you sirs? By the by, may I know by which bus did you arrive here?

We came here by the Hassan-Chikmagalur bus

Why !? You have direct bus convenience from Mangalore to Belur. You could have travelled by it. Is it not?

Oh! I am sorry, nobody gave us proper guidance. Only we know that Belur and Halebeed are in Hassan District, so we have come here via Hassan.

Then, better you know the bus routes properly so that you can give proper instructions to those who visit in future. Our Belur has good bus services, there being, direct services from Mysore, Bangalore, Mangalore, Udupi, Shimoga Mercara and Dharmastala. Hassan is 24 miles

From here, Arasikere 37 miles, Chikmagalur 14 miles. Mudigere 23 miles and Sakalespur 24 miles Buses run frequently from here to all the places. Those coming by train, may get down either at Arasikere, Banavara or at Hassan and can catch the bus to this place. Even one can get down at Kadur and come via Chikmagalur by bus.

We mean to halt here to-night and proceed to-morrow. Is there any convenient lodging for us ?

Yes. you have all conveniences for your stay here. There are good hotels with rooms to stay in. For temporary stay. there is a first grade Pravasi Mandir and a Taluk Development Board Pravasi Mandir. Besides there is a Choultry very near to the temple itself. The room at the choultry will be rented out for the visitors. The student groups that came on leisure trips of sight seeing can also command convenience. Again the town has good postal. Telephone and Telegraph conveniences.

Well Sir. how far is the temple from the bus stand ?

Look there. the Temple is only ½ Km. away come on, keep your kit at Pravasimandir. First refresh yourself with a light lunch. Then let us go to the temple

See there the high structure that appears is the gateway of the temple. It has 5 stories. How mejestic it looks ! you can see this tower from a distance of 3 miles. It is 65 ft. high from the ground level. It is the main entrance to the temple. Leave your foot-wear. Now let us get in

This is the compound of the temple. see here the pillar with God Garuda at the foot. It is 3½ft. high. This is not a Hoysala art but this is the work of one shilpi Javarayacharya of Mysore Let us go on. The temple which you are seeing in front is that of LORD CHANNAKESHAVA. The temple situated on a star-shaped foundation of 4ft. high 130ft long and 150 ft. wide Now let us move on. This is the main entrance to the temple On both sides of the door you can see the symbol of Hoysala (Hoysala Lanchana) which has been cut out in stone. Look at the top of the door you can see the lion-headed God(Narasimha) in the middle Look at the canopy of the figure

you can see the ten incarnations (Dashavatara) of LORD VISHNU five on each side,

'Oh' it is simply grand ! How artistically they have been carried in a single rock where are the idols called the bracket figures(Shilabalikas)

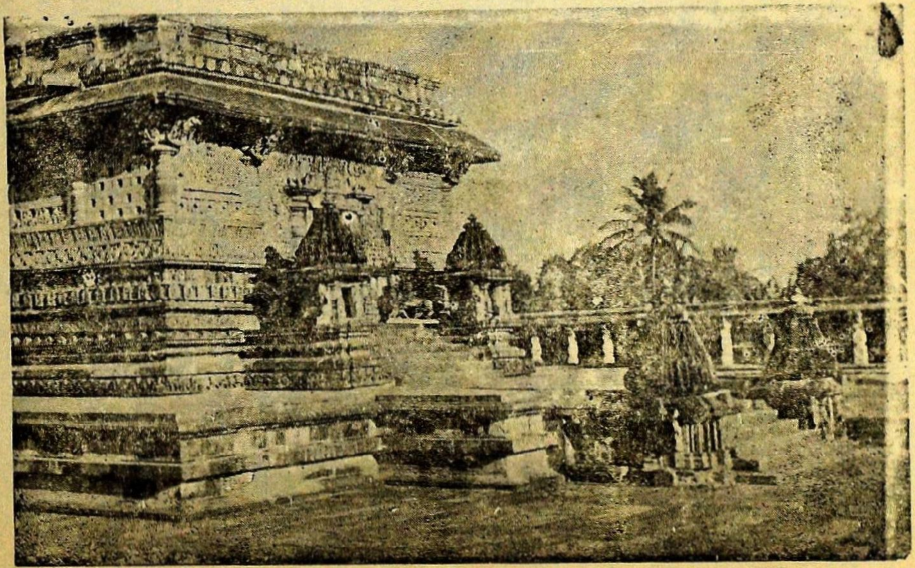
Now I am just going to acquaint you with hem. They are the best specimens of architecture If you see them then you can have a clear idea of the intelligence and skill of the past artists of Karnataka. There are on the whole 42 bracket figures in the temple. Each excells the other in beauty, art and minutness. Let us go round the temple from the right side.

Yes! yes! that will enable us to see them one by one without missing any one

If you want you can make a mark of it. Look at the bracket figure on the top of the corner under the caves it is the first figure.

1 PARAGON OF BEAUTY WITH A MIRROR—

She holds in her left hand a mirror & looking at her beauty in it. She is arranging by her right hand the folds to her dress. How natural is her standing pose and her facial expressions? Her assistant on the right side holds a monkey and grapes in her hand.



BELUR TEMPLE

2 A BEAUTY WITH HER PET PARROT-

You can see on the fore-palm of her right hand a parrot sitting with unfolded wings. You can see the youthful mein in her face. It seems as if she is holding serious conversation with her pet. Her assistants are standing on either sides. Between these two bracket figures you will see the king Vishnuvardhana sitting with his courtiers.

3 Look at the third figure. She holds in her left hand folded betel leave. Her maid on the right side holds coloured water vessel. The maid on the left side is filling another syringe.

4 Look at the fourth figure. She is in her perfect make-up. She holds folded betel leaves in her left hand and is waiting for her lover. The maids on both sides are rendering help. Below these 2 bracket figures, see on the wall, Bhishma the epic here lying on arrow-bed (Sharamancha) By this side you can see Bheema one of the Pandavas, holing up an elephant.

5 A BEAUTY WORRIED BY A MONKEY—

A monkey is pulling the edge of her sari. She is going to beat it with a branch of a tree with anger. The monkey is mocking at her with its open mouth. You can see even the teeth in its mouth.

6 SHE-HUNTRESS-

Look at her Gashime like huntress. You can see a bird sitting on a conopy behind. She is aiming her arrow at the bird. Her maid on the left side is carrying a stag which has been a prey to the huntress.

7 HAIR DRESSING–

She is dressing her hair after her bath. The attendants are holding flowers and toilets.

8 DANCER–

Look at the figure, you can clearly see three portions in her body–one from waist downwards other from the waist to the chest and another upwards. It is a dance comprising three poses of one body at the same time. This is the most difficult pose, which no dancer has been able to perform upto the present day.

9 A SHAM SHE-SAINT-

She is in the disguise of a saint. In her left hand she holds a rod with skull at the top. In her right hand she holds begging bowl made of skull.

10 A DRUMMER-

She holds in her left hand a drum and in her right she is playing upon it. You can see her

hand holding the ropes that bind the drum. How natural the rope appears ? You can just look at it. On the wall, above it, you can see the 8 Dikpalakas on their respective Vahanas.

11 THE FLUTIST

She is playing on the flute. Her maid on the left side is singing to tune of the rythem. How naturaly the fingers on her left hand are open while playing on flute. Look, just below the figure, you can see Chandrahasa offering his head which he cut off, to Godess Kali. Look at the garment he wears. It resembels the present day overcoat.

12 A SONGSTRESS-

She is singing with a tala vanity. Even one can see her teeth in her open mouth while singing On the right side of this figure you can see idols illustrating the epic story of Prahlada as well as Narasimha, the incarnation of Vishnu.

13 WORLD BEWITCHING BEAUTY-

Look at her standing pose. How natural and realistic it is ! She indeed bewitches the world by

her beauty, Her hands and legs are cut out very nicely. Look at the canopy behind, How skilfully the artist has carved it. Look at the canopy above her left shoulder. You con see a jack-fruit and a fly on it. A lizard is planning to catch it. How natural is the pose of the lizard !

''What is this ? There is another door here. Yes, three doors are there to the temple· The temple faces east. The door in the east is the MAIN DOOR There is another door to the south, it is called as the FRIDAY DOOR. It will be opened on certain days. Here also you can see on both sides of the door idols illustrating the Hoysala symbols you can see on the right side of the door some bracket figures again.

14 VIOLINIST-

Look up there. She is a violinist. She stands holding the instruments in her left hand. The maids are arranging for a concert.

15 CURLY HAIRED BEAUTY-

She holds a mirror in her left hand and is arranging the curls on her foreqhead with her

right hand. The maids on both sides are supplying necessary toilets.

16 Coquettish Huntress-

She is plucking a mango by her right hand. Look at the pretty pose by which she holds the fruit.

17 A Heroic Huntress-

Look at this figure. She is dressed up as a hunter at the creeper above. You can see birds sitting on it.

18 Masculine Woman-

She is wearing a beard, a moustache like a man and is playing on the drum.

Below this figure you can see two-champions wresling. They are wearing monkey caps. That woman is busy in painting something.

What Sir ? Are the bracket figures over ?

No Sir, we have seen 18 bracket figures up to this place. There are some more on the other

side, Now I shall acquaint you with the figure on the wall.

Shiva Jalandhara

Look here. In this corner Shiva is holding Jalandhara with his fork like sphere and holds him high. He is tramping under feet.

Pootani-

Look at the next figure. There are varieties of arms in her hands. Her face, hands and legs appear as if of a skeleton. You can see scorpion cut out below her, to show that she has much venom.

Bali-the Demon Emperor-

Look at the wall to the left side. Vamana incarnation of Vishnu is begging for three feet of earth before Bali. Seeing this the demon Guru Shukracharya gets angry and walks away Bali is pacifying the vexed Guru.

Ravana another Demon king lifting the Kailas mountain.

Look at the corner. You can see the ten headed Demon–king Ravana holding up Kailas mountain with his hands. In the middle portion of the mountain you can see Lord Shiva sitting with his beloved Parvathi.

Chamundi–

Look here the Godess is fully armed in all her hands and is busy in killing the cruel demon Mahishasura

Brahma-

Pray Sir, is it a chain of bells we see above the head of Brahma.

Yes Sir, is it a speciality !? See how [skilfully the artist has carved out of the chain. It is highly natural and realistic,

The Sun God–

Look here, the Sun God is coming up on his Seven horse Charriot.

Up-to-date 20th century-

Look at this woman having dressed herself in fine clothes and tied her hair in the latest fasion with ribbon. She is ready to go for an evening walk. You can see her maid following her with bul-dog cup in her hand. By now we already seen half of the important sight in the temple. Now look at the north wall.

Arjuna shooting the fish target–

One who wanted to marry Droupadi has to shoot the fish target looking at the shadow reflected in the bowl of oil, placed just below the target pillar. Here you can see Arjuna the master of Archary and one among the Pandavas is shooting the target.

"What is it Sir ? there are a number of pits of image"

It is said that by beating the several parts of its body, seven musical sounds can be heard. So these pits are the results of the testing made by visitors.

"Alright, why shall we not try" ?

"No no, if you are prepared to pay a penalty of Rs. 5000 'you may try' A careful watch is kept by the Central Government Nobody is dare enough to try this experiment since the instruction of the watch and ward. Thanks to the timely action of the Central Government.

Otherwise you would have never seen some of the figures which you have seen now. Now again we will be seeing some more bracket figures.

19 The Arch Dancer–

Look up, you can see the dancer in a fine pose. Just observe the natural and artistic facial expressions in her face.

The maids on both sides are playing upon their musical instruments keeping time with the dance.

20 The Arch Songster–

Look at this figure. She holds, metalic time keeper in her hands. You can see besides her parts maids helping her playing their instruments

21 The Devine Dancer–

Look at this figure. She is dancing cheer fully. The musical instruments are being played upon by her maids on both sides.

22 Shame Huntress–

She holds in her left hand a forke like sphere with a skull fixed at the top. How majestic are her looks !

23 Successful Huntress

She is returning from her successful hunting. Look at the decoration of the bow on her left shoulder. How minutely it is carved out. Her maids on her both sides are carrying the prey of their hunt, Look on the right side and other maid is removing the thorn that has plucked her leg. Here we can see even her toes.

24 Dancing Beauty–

She is practicing her dance. The maids are helping her by playing on their instruments.

25 Mohini Dance–

God Vishnu took the form of Mohini, the world bewitching beauty and killed the demon

Bhasmasura through her dance by which she made him to place his hand on his head which burnt him completely to ashes. And this figure illustrates the epic story Though her hands and feet are demonstrating various poses, they are in a straight line. How skilfully the artist has carved it ! If a little water is put on the right hand above her head, It drops to the tip of her nose and then one on the left breast toe, on the right thumb and finally on the toe. The image appears to be bent, it is in a straight line. Here you can see one more door to the north of the temple. It is called as 'The door of Heaven'

26 Beauty After Bath–

See there, she is coming after finishing her bath and going to wear on her sari. She observes a scorpion under the folds of the sari and gets frightened and shakes the sari well. The scorpion falls down, Just see the scorpion on the pedistal Observe how frightened she appears ! Look on the wall between these two bracket figures. Garuda, the king of birds and Hanuman the faith ful servant of Sri Rama are quarelling for a fruit.

God Vishnu seeing this shoots his boomarang 'Chakra' and cuts the fruit into two equal halves and settles the dispute,

27 A Beauty in wait-

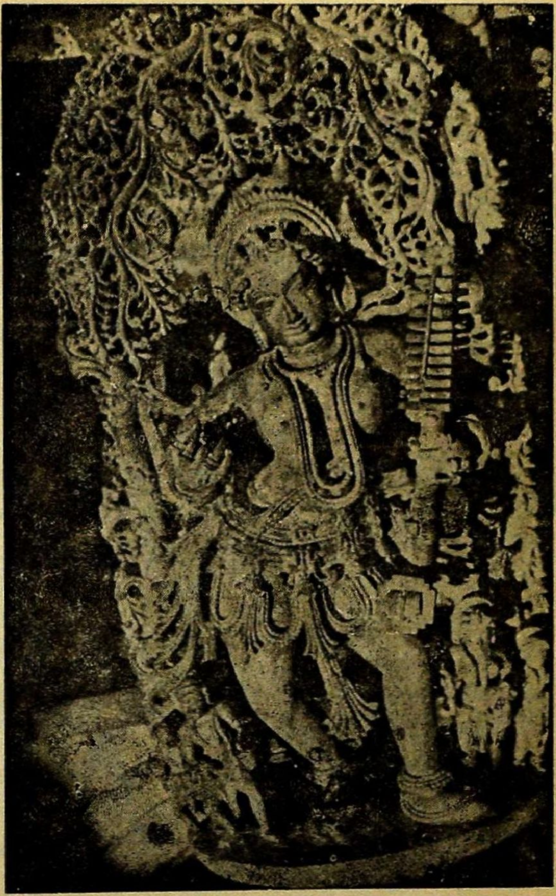
She is fully dressed, and waiting for her lover. How beautifully she is dressed herself The maids are helping her with toilets.

28 A Gunjurer (Gipsy Girl–)

She holds in her left hand palm leaves and holds the right hand in a speaking pose. Her facial expression shows the same. Look at the knot of her hair· A modern civilised woman is sure to feel ashamed and jealous on seeing this. We can even make out the attractive curls on her fore-head.

28 A beauty after a Hearty Meal–

This fully attired beauty is running from her dinner and is about to retire for rest, She holds in her left hand betel leaves to chew. But her feels sultry and fanning with her right hand How natural are her dress and the standing pose in case ! Look up on the wall between these two bracket figures. You can see God Vishnu



LADY WITH VEENA

laying upon the God of seven headed cobra called the Adishesha. Shree Laxmi wife of Vishnu is attending on him.

30 EXPERT VIOLINIST-

This expert musician is playing on her violin which is in the form of a snake. The left side of the violin resembles the head of a snake.

31 LOVER OF ORNAMENTS-

She is fully dressed and has put on all sorts of ornaments on her body. She is looking herself in a mirror held by her maid. The maid on the left side is holding a garland of flowers. Look at the garland, how finely the flowers are carved.

32 A KITE DANCER-

She is dancing imitating the play of flying a kite. Look at her standing pose. She is standing as if she is pulling to the kite using her both hands. You may see the eagerness depicted in her face.

33 A FORE-TELLER-

Look at this gipsy girl. She is holding in her left hand a small drum and a time keeper set in her

right hand. She is fortelling the future to the world.

34 A BEAUTY WITH WELL COMBED HAIR–

See, how artistically she has tied her hair into a fine knot. This is up-to-date pony tail She has probably fore-seen, this style to come in future even about 800 years back or more, so the artist has aimed as it.

35 A BEAUTY IN PERFECT MAKE-UP–

She is ready to go for a dance. She has put on her best dress and ornaments. Probably she has forgotten to put on her toe–ring. The maids are putting it to her toe. Perhaps she is afraid of falling. So she is holding a creeper in her left hand to get support.

38 A MOCK–BIRD–

Look at this figure, She has a beard and moustache like man. She has a faminine knot of hairs. She looks neither masculine nor feminine. She dances holding a drum in her left hand.

37 A DEVINE SONGSTRESS-

See, she is a realy devine beauty. She holds in both hands the time-keeping sets. She is singing perhaps with a tone of Knightingale. You can see the rows of her teeth in her open mouth. The maids are helping her by playing on instruments.

38 AN ARCH DANCER-

Look at her. She is dancing to the tune of her accomplice on both sides of her You can make out of her steps in lein with time.

Now you have seen 38 bracket figures. There are four more to be seen, inside the pillar of the Lion headed 'God Narasimha'. It is said that this pillar revolved on its own axis formerly as if having ball bearings. You please turn your eyes to the lower part of pillar. You can see an elephant which is as small as arecanut and horse as minute as a horse gram. There is a living example for the skill and the greatness of the sculptures of the by gone-days.

'Oh' we cannot make the head or tail of it here. It is very dark.

'So sorry' I forgot to tell you of the Search Light arrangements inside the temple. You can make use of this by paying only Rs. 3-00 where by you may see everything clearly. See these four bracket figures on the top of the corner pillars.

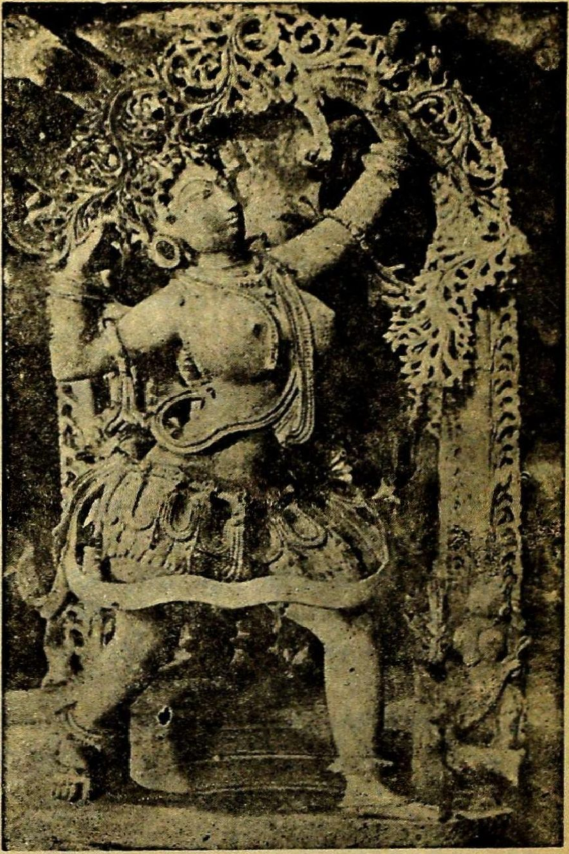
39 BEAUTY WITH HER PET PARROT-

She holds a creeper in her right hand. A parrot is sitting on fore–palm of her left hand She looks as if she is holding a conversation with it. These figures are more attractive than those which you saw on the outside. This is only because these have protection against cold, wind and rain.

'Just come forward'

40 TYPICAL HAPPY BEAUTY

She is called Shanthala. She is busy in dancing. Look at the canopy behind, how beautiful it looks ! She is decked with a gem just above the middle of the fore-head. It is cut out as if it is pendulous. Just think the delicacy of the sculpture in carving this masterpiece.



HUNTRESS

41 COUNTRY DANCER-

She wears on her fore-arm a good number of bangles which gives an impression of moving to and fro.

42 BEAUTY TIEING HER HAIR IN TO A KNOT-

She is wringing her hair to remove the water after a bath we can see drops of water collected at the tip of the hair.

Now let me show you these. Come on, let us step in, This is the central portion of the temple. This is called "Navaranga Hall" There are 42 pillars, on the whole inside the temple. Each pillar is unique in beauty and splendour. Some are cut out like bicycle tyre and some resemble that of a car. Now through a glance at this pillar can you imagine its beauty ?

Now you have a good acquaintance of the 42 Bracket figures. Look at the top of the dome, It is enriched with minute carvings, just view at the middle.

It is simply grand ! How much pain they have taken to bring skilfully the piece of art. Surely

they have not worked for monetary profit. But they wanted to lay permanent pillar to the glory of their art of the ancient times. They have left a monumental witness to world. Come on, let us have a darshan of Lord Keshava, Now you see Jaya-Vijaya standing on either side of the door with cups in the hands, Look at the stone beam at the top of the door frame, it is 12 feet of long full of carvings. Let us go in. The grand figure that appears with super natural grandeur is almighty God 'Channakeshava' It is also called as 'Soumyakeshava'. The figure is 9ft. high According to the epict on the walls of the temple it was installed in the year of 1117 A.D. It is decorated with gold and silver jewels. Annual Car Festival takes place in the month of Chaitra Shukla12th day A vast crowd of pilgrims witness the occasion Come on let us be blessed with Teertha-Prasada of flowers and Tulasidal. Now let us go and witness the other temples around in the compound.

GRAVITY PILLAR-

This pillar was meant to use as Light Post it is called as 'Gravity Pillar' It is about 42 feet

high. If you, just peep in at one side of the pillar, can see the other side. It rests itself in a peculiar style and that is why it is called as the Gravity pillar.

THE TEMPLE OF KAPPECHENNIGARAYA—

See there, this idol resembles Channakeshava the regular diety in all respect except in height. It is not worshipped as it is said to be broken Of late, the Government has made arrangements for worshipping this also. Inside this temple you can see the idol of Goddess Kali. She is fully armed in all her hands. You can see her dancing pose.

See here, this is Saraswathi, the Goddess of knowledge. How annoying this image is! You can even count the palm leaves in her hands. It is one more proof of skill and labour of patience.

THE TEMPLE OF MOTHER SOUMYANAYAKI

She is the beloved of Sri Channakeshva She is worshiped both in the morning and in the evening.

THE TEMPLE OF ANDAL-

Come on, let us go round from the right, first on the outer skirts of the temple, numerous idols can be seen in rows. Here is God Vishnu in the incarnation of Varaha (Pig). It has opened its mouth. See teeth in his jaws. See the epic emperor Bali. He is giving a gift of land measuring three feet. Now you can see a pond to the north-east of the main temple. It is called as 'Vasudeva Teertha' The Government has bread a fish nursery in it. The water from this pond is taken and used only once on special day in a year that being the car-festival day. In the adjecent room of this pond there are statues of Sri Krishna Raja Wadeyer and Sri Hoysaleshwara Vishnuvardhana made of mixed metal (mishraloha)

On entering the gate to left, you can see the small temple of Sri Ramanujacharya and one after another the small temple of Yoganarasimha Dasharathi Modaliyandan, Thiruchi Nambiyar Alwar, Paravasu Devaru, Pe-Alwar, Kalinga Mardhana Krishna and Anjaneya. This is the temple's Kitchen Here are prepared dishes to be offered to God every day. Let us move.

on. Here you can see the various forms of vehicles of God Keshava. They will be used in procession during the days of Car festival. You can see Garuda, the Elephant, the Horse, the snake Adishesha, the Swan, the Lion as well as Hanuman. These are all made of wood carved with brass sheets. Now let us take rest a while proceed.

'What Sir, most people say that Jakanachari built this temple. Is it true ?'

So goes version. There are no evidences. It may or may not be true.

'What is the sacredness attached to this place ?'

There are so many cock and bull tales about this temple. I have neither any interest in them, or belief too, I have to acquiant you with what is real, that is all,

How grand and beautiful is the temple !? Are the stones of this type available in plenty in this Locality ?

I do not think we can find such stone within a radious of 10 miles of this town. It is a wonder

how they brought it. How many have worked at it and how many engineers supervised at it can only be imagined, Come on, let us go out. Now you can go in for and of the photos of the various Gods and figures in the shop nearby. You can have a memory of your visit.

How far is Halebeed from here?

HALEBEED TEMPLE

KEDARESWARA TEMPLE-1219 A. D.

The greatest city of **DWARA SAMUDRA** flourished as the Capital of Hoysala Empfre during the 12th and the 13th Centuries. The zenith of its greatness was reached during the reign of Veeraballala II, the grand son of Vishnu-vardhana who extended his empire from sea to sea between the Cauveri and the Krishna rivers.

He and his younger queen ABHINAVA KETHALA DEVI built the temple of KEDARESW-ARA in 1219 A. D.

The temple was designed by Furguson. two generations ago, as a GEM OF INDIAN ARCHI-TECTURE.

He says if this temple has been illustrated in any thing like completness there was proba bly nothing in india which would have conveyed

a better idea of what it's architecture were capable of accomplising.

Unfrotunately portion of the temple collapsed 80 years ago and it was not possible to renounce them in proper shape.

Originally its Navaranga hall had a smallest shrine on either side, while over the main shrine arose a beautiful star shaped 'VIMANA' (tower) of soap stone. The other walls, the tower, the door ways and the ceilings were profusely carved and the temple looked here like a devine piece of Jewellery than a building built by human being.

'The basement of the temple which stands on a high platform having a number of sculptured friezes depicting marching elephants, charging horse men. lions, mytholagical animals (Makara) swans, finally designed creeper scrolls. The most interesting of the friezes depicts the stories of THE RAMAYANA, THE MAHABHARATHA THE BHAGAVATHA in a sculptured band.

The upper parts of the walls here made by180 beautifully carved images of various of Gogs and Gaddesses stand under elegently designed fioral

arches and some of them are finely shaped and finished,

Inside the temple are seen a finely elegantly carved star-shaped pillars but the ceilings are of greater interest, They are mostly some simple dances full of carvings, The door-ways also show a wealth of fine workmanship.

WHERE TO GO & WHAT TO SEE IN

Halebeed Temple

Halebeed is about 11 miles to the east of this place. There is a good Asphalt Road, All buses to this place from Arsikere pass through Halebeed. It is 19 miles from Hassan and 18 miles from Banavar. There is direct bus convenience from both the places, Come on, let me take you to Halebeed.

This is Halebeed. It is Hobli Head quarters. It has a High School, a Middle School and a Post-Office attached with Telephone. Sugar Cane Paddy and Coconuts are the main crops of this place.

'Can we command good lodging here Sir?'

Yes, there are two Pravasi Mandirs, one by the Taluk Board, another by the Government Besides the High and Middle Schools accoma-date the visiting student population. during the vacations. There are good hotels to provide meals to the visitors. The temple you see in front is that of Hoysaleswara. It is only 3 furlongs away from the bus stand. Now let us go there This is the Hoysleswara temple. Take off your foot-wear here,

Go in. There is a famous saying about these temples. LOOKINSIDE THE BELUR TEMPLE AND OUTSIDE THE HALEBEED TEMPLE. You might be aware of it.

Accordingly the outside of the temple is simply grand to look at. As you saw at Belur simply there are rows of elephants, horses and creepers, this temple is bigger than that of Belur

The artists have carved the idols which illustrate the epiic stories of Ramayana and Mahabharatha Look here, you can see the Suras and Asuras are churning the milk ocean with the help of Mandara mountain using Adishesha as rope.

'What is it Sir ? I see all the figures being mutilated so much' ?

It is is quite reasonable. Formelry this place flourished under the name of 'DWARASAMUDRA But in the year 1311 Mallikafar and again in 1325 Mohamed-bin-Thcgalak, laid seize to this town hoping to get huge wealth. They not only carried as much wealth as possible but also destroyed the temple. Look here, story of the birth of Krishna is depicted. It begins from the imprisonment of Vasudeva and Devaki the parents of Krishna. It ends with the death of Kamsa in the hands of Krishna. Look here this Basava. It is nearly 8 feet high. There are two Shiva Lingas and two bulls one in front of each Linga. Look at the face of the bulls. How majestic is the carriage of the neck ! The chain of bell, round the neck is very nicely cut cut.

The main door of the temple faces north There are 4 doors to the temple, Two to east one to the north and the other to the south. The Sun-God is behind the big Basava which is ten feet h igh, You can see the dwarpalkas Jaya-Vijaya with cups in the hands on both side of the door. They are nearly six feet high. Its carvings are very minute and nice, words cannot describe them. One can enjoy them only after seeing,

Above the top beam of the door you can see the image of Nataraja On one side you can see the image of Sharadula. It has unfolded tail which exhibits minute skill carvings, Let us move on This is the door of south. Opposite to this door in the compound, you can see the God Ganapathi which is eight feet in height,

Here you can see the image illustrating the story of Pandava. You can see the various way of terrifying him. He is tramped byelephant and is burnt in fire. Finally the demon Hiranyakashipu was killed by NARASIMHA

Look up there, the image of Gajendramoksha the elephant king. Look at these images. How

KESHA SHRINGARA

beautifully they are carved ! It is impossible to describe in words. Only you may enjoy by seeing this.

Now we come to the images illustrating epic story of Ramayana. The Vanaras are building the bridge. Rama is handing over his ring to Anjaneya. You see Rama is shooting seven trees with a single arrow.

Look at Abhimanyu who is breaking through the enemy column 'Padmo–Vyuha' as at Belur Here is an idol of a monkey pulling the saree of a woman, She is turned round to beat it with a stick in the hand. See, you can make out that she is wearing foot–wear also,

Look above, Ravana the demon king has lifted up 'Kailasa Parvatha' in his hands, You can see a bull as small as a ground nut seed in it.

Come on, let us enter into the temple. There are two 'Navarangas' in front of the idols of 'Hoysaleswara' and 'Shanthaleswara' in front of each Linga. You can see the crowns cut out worn by the Dwarapalakas.

BASTHIHALLI–

The village is only 3 furlongs away from the Temple. This is the temple of Parswanatha. You can see the statue which is 15 feet high. Above the head of this statue you can see a seven headed Serpent. All the seven heads are cut out very skilfully, According to the Digambara version, the statue is nacked. The Jain priests offer worship twice a day both in the morning and in the evening. There are 12 pillars cut out in a black stone in the central hall of the temple. They are so bright and smooth, that one can see his face in them. as if in a mirror. The reflections in different pillars afe difrerent. in one pillar you can see only your head, in the other, only your trunk and in another only your legs and feet. How skilfull the artist may be in turning stone into such a master piece ! ?

KEDARESWARA TEMPLE–

This temple faces east, It is built on a foundation of four feet high. The statue of the diety is missing. So there is no worship, See here, how beautiful is the fjgure of Kalinga Mardhana. Look at the facial expression and

ornaments of Krishna, How fine they look. This is the most impartant, of all images.

After all these. we have to go to Sravana belagola. How are we to go ?

There is bus convenience to Hassan from this place. You may catch the buses from Hassan to Sravanabelagola. You must certainly visit that place. Hurry up. the Hassan bus is ready.

There are the sights that one can never forget. You are very fortunate to have born as natives of this district.

'Definitely it is pride and previlege' not only of us but also the people of entire Karnataka.

We are bent upon visiting Sravanabelagola. will you please guide us there also ? Please excuse me for the trouble and come with us.

No trouble, I will do it with pleasure. We consider, it is our duty and honour to do this service. This will also be an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of that place once again.

We are fortunate to get your guidance in seeing these heavenly temples.

It is getting late. Let us wait at the corner of the tank. The buses run on the bund of this tank to Hassan. This is a big tank and it is called as 'Dorasamudra'. It is a source of water to irrigate vast fields of lands where paddy and sugarcane are grown. Oh ! how forunate we are to get the bus ready. Come on, let us get into the bus. After all Hassan is only 19 miles from this place But the road is not well,

This is Hassan, We can catch direct bus to Sravanabelagola. First let us refresh ourselves with a light tiffin.

How fine the town appears !

Not only the appearance but also the climate is fine. This place is called as the 'POOR MANS' OOTY, This taluk is famous for Potato and Copa. This town is a centre for Education having so many Lower and Higher Primary Schools, High Schools, First Grade Colleges for Boys and Girls separately, an Engineering, College, a Law College. an Industrial School,

FLUTE DANCE

a Polytechnic and a Vidyapeetha on the bund of River Yagachi. Beside, there is an impliments Factory which provides impliments to farmers.

If so why can't we visit it now ?

No, to-day is Sunday, so a holiday. Let us proceed to Travellers Bungallow now, we can stay here and tomorrow visit the factory before you proceed to Sravanabelagola,

SRAVANA BELAGOLA

Bus is ready to Sravanabelagola. Hurry up, let us catch it.

What Sir, which is this town ? This Looks pretty big, is it Belagola ?

No, this is Channarayapatna, a Taluk Head quarter. Sravanabelagola is only 8 miles from here. Everyone who is to go to Sravanabelagola must through this town as there is no other

routes.

In which direction are we to go to Belagola ?

It is to the south of this place. we have to proceed on the Bangalore road for a while, and deviate to the right leaving Bangalore track. you can see a hill in the form of semi-circle. On the top of the hill which you see a statue like a pillar even from this place. This is 'GOMMATESWARA'

What Sir ! If we can see the statue even from distance of about 6 miles. how giganatic it must actually be !

This statue is nearly 58 feet in hi6h.

If so, is it cut out of bits of rocks ?

No Sir, that is the specialty. Though the figure is 58 feet it is cut out of a single bounder This is Sravanabelagola, let us gat down here.

We must first place our luggage in a secure place and then go up the mountain. Where we shall keep these luggages ?

There are many Dharmashalas here. They are meant for the use of piligrims. You can make use of them.

Come here let us climb this hill first. You see, there are two hills here. One is called as the 'Indragiri' the other one as 'Chandragiri' The hill that we are climbing now is Indragiri. As I told you earlier you can see it one single rock. There are 5000 steps here. we have climbed nearly half of the steps. Let us reat a while.

What ! we are seeing a big poud at the foot How fine it looks !?

Certainly it looks grand. It is by the pond that the town got the name of 'Sravanabelagola'

Pardon me Sir. We could not understand. Will you make it clear ?

Yes the word Belagola means-White pond' This significant pond gives the name to the town

If so what is meant by Sravana ?

The word Sravana means a jain Saint. It is Sravana's Belagola, so the name follows.

What is dinning noice we hear from the town Sir ?

Oh ! that's good copper and brass vessels are manufactured here. There are many concerns involved in the production. It is that sound you hear. It is getting late. Let us go to the top. Now I will acquaint you with important things. Let us go to the compound. The idol you see in front is the statue of Sri Gomateswara. It is 58 feet in height. See though it is very high how noble its appearance is ?

What Sir. It is naked statue ?

It represents self sacrifice and renunciation

May I know, how old the statue is ?

It is nearly one thousand years old, according to history.

We wish to keep on seejng.

Let us leave this place. How significant and noble they are ! The District which commands such artistic beauty is really holy. We can never forget them. It seems the artists of Karnataka had reached the pinnacle of the human artistic elevation and these images are the specimens or their skill in art. Is the Car Festival observed here ?

Certainly the Car Festival will be celebrated in the month of chaitra. besides there is another grand festival observed once in 12 years. Theat is called as 'Maha Mastakabhisheka' The Jain devotees from every corner of the country gather here during the festival. They offer 'Abhisheka' to the image from head to toe, in milk, curds and honey.

Let us go down the hill· Please allow us to tender our sincere thanks for the trouble you have taken for our sake, Shall we take leave of you ?

Yes, I bid good-bye to you all. I have a little work to attend. I mean leaving this place to-morrow. I want to go through some of the epics here and write a book on this place. Well, it is good, please oblige us by sening a copy of your book, as and when it is published.

Well, good-bye to you. Namasthe.

See here, if yon are in need of any book or photos of Belur, Halebeed, Sravanabelagola you please write to the following address ! We shall oblige at once not with the interest of money making, but in the spirit of service to humanity.

GOVARDHANA GIRIDHARI

Welcome to the Tourists - Internationality known

Belur Halebeed-Sravanabelagola

B. L. ANANDARAM

C. K. S. Temple Guide, Belur

For Beatiful Photographs & Temple Views

Please Visit :

B. L. Ranganatha Gupta

Dedicatcd for Piligrims and Tourist

Opposte Temple, BELUR. Hassan Dist.

(Roll Films are also sold here)

High Class Cameras & Binoculars for Hire